

# UNIT PLAN BRAINSTORM



## Work Hard, Play Card (English Language Arts, History, Social Studies)

There's magic in a deck of cards, and it doesn't have to be a sleight of hand! Dive into the world of playing cards with your students with a discussion to see who is already familiar with cards, card games they know and any fun tricks! Then, spark curiosity by embarking on a full-group research project all about the history of playing cards. Some questions to get you started are: *Where did the concept of modern-day playing cards originate? Are there different types of cards in different cultures?* and *Why does a deck contain 52 cards?* Once your students have some context for playing cards, ask each of them to learn a card game they've never played before! Some great places to start may be asking an adult in their life to pass down a nostalgic game, looking up a card game that's important to their culture or researching a game from another country. Once everyone has done this, have students break into groups and share their games with one another, rotating every ten minutes. You've created a card game festival in your very own classroom!

To support this unit, use the [Dealer's Choice Creativity Page](#) in the Discover and Create section.

## Making Ninja Moves (English Language Arts, History, Physical Education)

While some may only know ninjas as fictional characters from cartoons, comics or action movies, their origins come from very real lore. Begin uncovering this rich history by prompting your students: *What do you know about ninjas?* or *How do you think ninjas came to be?* As a class or in small groups, begin researching who ninjas were and what they did. Make sure to also investigate how they trained and became such stealthy warriors. After this discovery, compare your class's first assessment of ninjas to the research you've conducted with questions like: *What surprised you about the history of ninjas?* and *How do ninjas differ from how they're portrayed in the media?* Now, it's time for your class to become ninjas! Well, not literally. Explain that, just like ninjas can train to be warriors with the qualities of discipline, accuracy, control and hard work, they too can achieve their goals with the same principles. Have your students write down their personal goals, and then have them pick one aforementioned ninja quality to help them get there. Afterwards, have them embody their ninja quality through a pose or physical movement. This could be a graceful balancing pose to demonstrate control or a quick movement to show accuracy. Have everyone share their ninja moves one by one in a giant circle and create a ninja ballet by grouping students' movements together. With their goals at the forefront of their minds, you'll have some warriors ready to conquer their own story!

To support this unit, use the [Martial ART Creativity Page](#) in the Respond and Connect section.

## Third Time's The Charm (Theater, English Language Arts)

As the saying goes, comedy occurs in threes. To begin an exploration of comedy, prep your students with a discussion about what the genre of comedy entails and what makes a joke or bit funny. Some questions to get you started are: *Can you name any famous comedians or comedic performers? What types of comedy are there?* or *What's the difference between a story and a joke?* Explain that there is a famous technique in comedy writing called the rule of threes. This is when a pattern of two elements sets up a pattern for the third element to be a knee-slapping punchline that breaks said pattern! Have your students brainstorm a personal story they feel comfortable sharing—it could even be made up if they can't think of one! Then, have them write it down in narrative form. Next, split them into pairs and have them work with a partner to find a section of their story that could be split into three beats, or moments. Using the rule of threes, establish a pattern with the first two beats and turn the third into a punchline. Afterwards, have them practice reciting it to one another. Now, not only are they storytellers—they're stand-up comedians as well!

To support this unit, use the [Plot Twist! Activity](#) in the Respond and Connect section.